



**POLICY REPORT  
DEVELOPMENT AND BUILDING**

Report Date: April 26, 2016  
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VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20  
Meeting Date: May 3, 2016

TO: Vancouver City Council  
FROM: Acting General Manager of Planning and Development Services  
SUBJECT: Sign By-law Amendment - Floating Signs

***RECOMMENDATION***

THAT the Acting General Manager of Planning and Development Services be instructed to make application to amend the Sign By-law to clarify the scope of the by-law, clarify that the definition of a sign includes signs located on water within City boundaries and to add a definition and regulations for floating signs, generally in accordance with Appendix A, and that this application be referred to a public hearing:

FURTHER THAT the Director of Legal Services be instructed to prepare the necessary amending by-law for consideration at public hearing.

***REPORT SUMMARY***

This report recommends amendments to the Sign By-law that clarify the scope of the by-law, and specifically regulate floating signs.

***CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS***

The Acting General Manager of Planning and Development Services recommends approval of the foregoing.

## **REPORT**

### ***Background/Context***

The Sign By-law currently regulates all signs on any property other than streets, lanes or public parks. This includes signs on waters within the boundaries of the City, including False Creek and English Bay. Some of the waters within the City's boundaries are also subject to the jurisdiction of Port Metro Vancouver, which does not allow floating advertisements or marketing strategies.

Amendments to the Sign By-law are being proposed in advance of reporting to Council on the Sign By-law review, to respond to recent complaints about floating advertising signs in False Creek and English Bay. Following a consultant review of the new draft by-law and public consultation process, a re-organized and updated Sign By-law will be reported to Council in the fall.

### ***Strategic Analysis***

#### **1. Sign By-law Intent and Definitions**

The Sign By-law regulates the number, type, form, appearance and location of signs according to zoning districts and uses. The general intent of the Sign By-law is to permit signage that provides information to identify and locate businesses.

This report refers to third party advertising, which is defined in the Sign By-law as advertising that directs attention to products or services not sold on the premises where the sign is located. Third party advertising is primarily limited to billboards on sites that meet spatial separation requirements from uses such as residential, passenger rail and rapid transit.

#### **2. Proposed Sign By-law Amendments:**

The City has recently received several complaints about floating advertising signs on barges and commercial vessels in both False Creek and English Bay. The current regulations in the Sign By-law do not authorize this type of sign. For example, the floating signs contain third party advertising, which is only permitted on certain types of signs including billboards. Billboards are not permitted in the RS-1 zone, which is the zoning in much of False Creek and English Bay. The floating signs also contain automatic changeable copy, which is not permitted in the RS-1 zone either.

In order to clarify the regulations governing such signs, and to allow floating signs in a limited manner, it is recommended that the by-law be amended to clarify the scope of the by-law, to clarify the definition of a sign to include signs located on water within City boundaries and to add a definition and regulations for floating signs.

The following amendments, shown in italics, are proposed:

Section	Current Regulation	Proposed Amendment
Section 2 Definitions	Sign means any design, device, display, ...that is: (d) located on a site or projecting from a site onto a street;	Sign means any design, device, display, ...that is: (d) located on a site <i>or on waters located within the boundaries of the City</i> or projecting from a site onto a street;
	No definition	<i>Sign, Floating means a sign that contains third party advertising and is mounted or affixed to a barge, vessel or other structure that floats or is capable of floating on water;</i>
Section 3.1	This By-law applies to all signs on any property other than streets, lanes or public parks, and to all signs encroaching over a street or lane, except as noted in Section 3.2.	This By-law applies to all signs <i>within the boundaries of the City</i> , other than streets, lanes or public parks, and to all signs encroaching over a street or lane, except as noted in Section 3.2.
Section 5. 2.1 Exemptions from Permit Requirement	No regulation	A permit is not required for the following: (s) <i>a floating sign with a sign area less than 1 m<sup>2</sup> limited to one floating sign per barge, vessel or other structure.</i>
Section 11.6.2 Third Party Advertising	No regulation	No third party advertising shall be permitted except in the case of: (b) <i>a floating sign;</i>
<i>Section 11.13 Floating Signs</i>		<i>11.13.1 Floating signs, other than those exempt from a permit requirement under section 5.2.1 (s) of this By-law, are prohibited in all zones.</i>

The proposed regulations would prohibit floating signs, except those smaller than 1 m<sup>2</sup>, which would be limited to one per vessel and exempt from the requirement for a sign permit. This would allow limited promotional advertising on commercial vessels.

### **Financial**

There are no financial implications.

### **CONCLUSION**

This report recommends amendments to the Sign By-law to enable the regulation of floating signs.

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Floating Signs

BY-LAW NO. \_\_\_\_\_

A By-law to amend Sign By-law No. 6510  
Regarding Floating Signs

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VANCOUVER, in public meeting, enacts as follows:

1. This By-law amends the indicated provisions of the Sign By-law, No. 6510.
2. In section 2.1, Council strikes from the definition of Sign "(d) located on a site or projecting from a site onto a street;" and replaces it with "(d) located on a site or on waters located within the boundaries of the City or projecting from a site onto a street;".
3. In section 2.1, Council adds a new definition of "Sign, Floating" in correct alphabetical order as follows:

"Sign, Floating means a sign that contains third party advertising and is mounted or affixed to a barge, vessel or other structure that floats or is capable of floating on water;"
4. Council strikes section 3.1, and replaces it with:

"3.1 This By-law applies to all signs within the boundaries of the City, other than signs on or within a street, lanes or public parks, and to all signs encroaching over a street or lane, except as noted in Section 3.2."
5. In section 5.2.1, Council strikes the "." at the end of 5.2.1(r)(iv)(B) and replaces it with ";" and adds a new 5.2.1(s) in correct alphabetical order as follows:

"(s) a floating sign with a sign area less than 1 m<sup>2</sup>, limited to one floating sign per barge, vessel or other structure."
6. In section 11.6.2, Council inserts a new section 11.6.2(b) as follows:

"(b) floating sign;"

and renumbers the previous section 11.6.2 (b), (c), and (d) as 11.6.2 (c), (d) and (e) respectively.
7. In section 11, Council adds a new section 11.13, in correct numerical order, as follows:

**11.13 Floating Signs**

11.13.1 Floating signs, other than those exempt from a permit requirement under section 5.2.1 (s) of this By-law, are prohibited in all zones."

8. A decision by a court that any part of this By-law is illegal, void, or unenforceable severs that part from this By-law, and is not to affect the balance of this By-law.

9. This By-law is to come into force and take effect on the date of its enactment.

ENACTED by Council this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2016

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk